

Appln. No. 09/399,540  
Amdt. dated May 11, 2004  
Reply to Final Office Action of Mar 9, 2004  
Docket No. 6321-147

### REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

This response is filed in reply to the Office Action of March 9, 2004 (Office Action). As this response is timely filed within the 3-month shortened statutory period, no fee is believed due.

In paragraph 4 of the Office Action, claims 1-12 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over "Modeling Supply-Chain Networks by a Multi-Agent System", F. Lin *et al.*, Proceedings Systems Sciences (Jan. 1998) (hereafter "Lin") in view of "Using Simulation to Schedule Manufacturing Resources", H. Czarnecki, *et al.*, Proceedings of 1997 Winter Simulation Conference, ACM (1997) (hereafter "Czarnecki").

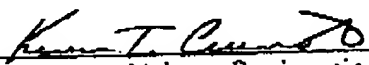
In paragraph 5, the Examiner has indicated that claims 13-17 are directed to allowable subject matter.

In accordance with the Examiner's suggestion, claim 1 has been amended to include the limitations of claim 3. Dependent claims 4, 5, and 7 have been amended to depend from claim 1 rather than claim 3 since claim 3 has been canceled. The Applicants believe that neither Lin, Czarnecki, nor any combination of the two teaches or suggests the Applicants' invention as claimed. Accordingly, withdrawal of the 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) rejection with respect to claims 1-12 is respectfully requested.

The Applicants believe that this application is now in full condition for allowance, which action is respectfully requested. The Applicants request that the Examiner call the undersigned if clarification is needed on any matter within this Amendment, or if the Examiner believes a telephone interview would expedite the prosecution of the subject application to completion.

Respectfully submitted,

Date: 5/11/04

  
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